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IN THE CLAIMS:

Please cancel claim 8, and amend the claims as follows:

1. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the method comprising:
 - receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list of a first particular list type, the data items of the first list being in a default format, the default format being a sortable format capable of being sorted by a list sorter, wherein the list sorter is incapable of sorting data elements in a format other than the sortable format;
 - calling a generic data retrieval method because to provide the data items of the first list are sortable, to the list sorter in [[a]] their default format;
 - sorting, by the list sorter, the data elements of the first list in their default format;
 - receiving a second request to sort data items of a second list of a second particular list type, the data items of the second list being in a default format which is other than the sortable format and therefore not sortable, by the list sorter, in their default format;
 - calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the second particular list type because and configured to provide the data items of the second list are not sortable in the default to the list sorter in the sortable format after having been transformed from their default format; and
 - sorting, by the list sorter, the data items of the second list in the transformed sortable format.
2. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, further comprising, when the specific data retrieval method is called, transforming the data items of the second list from their default format to [[a]] the sortable format.
3. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 2, wherein transforming the data items of the second list from their default format to the sortable format comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length.

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4. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein calling the specific data retrieval method and calling the generic data retrieval method is performed by [[a]] the list sorter which includes the generic data retrieval method.
5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, wherein upon calling the generic data retrieval method, further comprising requesting the data items of the first list in the default format.
6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 4, wherein requesting the data items in the default format comprises requesting viewable data from the first list.
7. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein when the specific data retrieval method is called, further comprising requesting the data items of the second list in [[a]] the sortable format, different from the default format.
8. (Canceled)
9. (Currently Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein sorting the data items comprises providing the data items to a list sorter for which the generic data retrieval method is defined for the list sorter; and wherein the list sorter and the generic data retrieval method are components of a class and the specific data retrieval method is a component of a subclass.
10. (Original) A method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising a plurality of list types and a sorting program, wherein the sorting program comprises (i) a list sorter comprising a sorting component and a generic data retrieval component configured to provide data to the sorting component; and (ii) a list instance for each of the plurality of list types, each list instance comprising a viewable data retrieval component configured to provide data to the generic data retrieval component and at

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least one list instance comprising a specific data retrieval component configured to provide data to the sorting component; the method comprising:

invoking the sorting component in response to receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list instance;

calling the specific data retrieval component of the first list instance if the data items of the first list instance are not sortable in a default format;

calling the generic data retrieval component if the data items of the first list instance are sortable in the default format;

if the generic data retrieval component is called, calling the viewable data retrieval component; and

sorting, by the sorting component, the data items of the first list instance.

11. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein calling the specific data retrieval component of the first list instance comprises overriding the generic data retrieval component.

12. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein at least a portion of the list instances do not include the specific data retrieval component.

13. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein the specific data retrieval component is configured to transform the data items of the first list instance from the default format into a format sortable by the sorting component.

14. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein transforming the data items from the default format to the format sortable by the sorting component comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length.

15. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein if the specific data retrieval component is called, returning the data items in a sortable format to the sorting component without invoking the viewable data retrieval component, wherein the sortable format is different from the default format if the default format is not sortable

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and is the same as the default format if the default format is sortable; and wherein if the viewable data retrieval component is called, returning the data items in the default format to the sorting component.

16. (Original) The method of claim 10, wherein if the specific data retrieval component is called, further comprising:

transforming the data items from the default format to a sortable format; and
returning the data items in the sortable format to the sorting component.

17. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein transforming the data items from the default format to the sortable format comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length.

18. (Original) A signal bearing medium, comprising a sorting program, wherein the sorting program comprises (i) a list sorter comprising a sorting component and a generic data retrieval component configured to provide data to the sorting component; and (ii) a list instance for each of a plurality of list types, each list instance comprising a viewable data retrieval component configured to provide data to the generic data retrieval component and at least one list instance comprising a specific data retrieval component configured to provide data to the sorting component; wherein the sorting program, when executed by a processor, performs a method of sorting lists, comprising:

invoking the sorting component in response to receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list instance;

calling the specific data retrieval component of the first list instance if the data items of the first list instance are not sortable in a default format;

calling the generic data retrieval component if the data items of the first list instance are sortable in the default format;

if the generic data retrieval component is called, calling the viewable data retrieval component; and

sorting, by the sorting component, the data items of the first list instance.

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19. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 18, wherein at least a portion of the list instances do not include the specific data retrieval component.
20. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 18, wherein the specific data retrieval component is configured to transform the data items of the first list instance from the default format into a format sortable by the sorting component.
21. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 18, wherein calling the specific data retrieval component of the first list instance comprises overriding the generic data retrieval component.
22. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 18, wherein if the specific data retrieval component is called, returning the data items in a sortable format to the sorting component without invoking the viewable data retrieval component, wherein the sortable format is different from the default format if the default format is not sortable and is the same as the default format if the default format is sortable; and wherein if the viewable data retrieval component is called, returning the data items in the default format to the sorting component.
23. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 18, wherein if the specific data retrieval component is called, further comprising:
transforming the data items from the default format to a sortable format; and
returning the data items in the sortable format to the sorting component.
24. (Original) The signal bearing medium of claim 23, wherein transforming the data items from the default format to the sortable format comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length.
25. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the method comprising:

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receiving a plurality of requests to sort data items of a plurality of lists of [[a]] particular different list types, wherein each of the data items to be sorted is initially in a respective default format and wherein at least a first portion of the data items to be sorted are sortable, by a list sorter, in their respective default format and a second portion of the data items to be sorted are not sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format;

for requests to sort data items that are sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format, calling a generic data retrieval method to provide the data items to the list sorter when the data items are sortable in [[a]] their respective default format;

for requests to sort data items that are not sortable, by a list sorter, in their respective default format, calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the particular list type to provide the data items to the list sorter in a transformed, when the data items are not sortable in the default format;

when upon calling the specific data retrieval method is called, transforming the data items from their respective default format to [[a]] the sortable format, wherein transforming the data items from their default format to the sortable format comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length; and sorting, by the list sorter, the data items.

26. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the method comprising:

receiving a plurality of requests to sort data items of a plurality of lists of [[a]] particular different list types, wherein each of the data items to be sorted is initially in a respective default format and wherein at least a first portion of the data items to be sorted are sortable, by a list sorter, in their respective default format and a second portion of the data items to be sorted are not sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format;

for requests to sort data items that are sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format, calling a generic data retrieval method when the data items are sortable in a default format;

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for requests to sort data items that are not sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format, calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the particular list type when the data items are not sortable in the default format; wherein calling the specific data retrieval method and calling the generic data retrieval method is performed by a list sorter which includes the generic data retrieval method; and

sorting the data items.

27. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the method comprising:

receiving a plurality of requests to sort data items of a plurality of lists of [[a]] particular different list types, wherein each of the data items to be sorted is initially in a respective default format and wherein at least a first portion of the data items to be sorted are sortable, by a list sorter, in their respective default format and a second portion of the data items to be sorted are not sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format;

for those data items that are sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format, calling a generic data retrieval method when the data items are sortable in a default format, wherein upon being called when the generic data retrieval method is called, requests[ing] the data items in the default format, wherein requesting the data items in the default format comprises requesting viewable data from the list;

for those data items that are not sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format, calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the particular list type when of the respective data items are not sortable in the default format; and

sorting the data items.

28. (Currently Amended) A computer-implemented method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the method comprising:

receiving a plurality of requests to sort data items of a plurality of lists of [[a]] particular different list types, wherein each of the data items to be sorted is initially in a respective default format and wherein at least a first portion of the data items to be

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sorted are sortable, by a list sorter, in their respective default format and a second portion of the data items to be sorted are not sortable, by the list sorter, in their respective default format;

for each of the plurality of requests:

calling a generic data retrieval method when in response to determining that the data items are sortable in [a] their respective default format;

calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the particular list type when in response to determining that the data items are not sortable in their respective default format, wherein the specific data retrieval method is uniquely defined for the particular list type and is configured to return data items for sorting in a transformed, sortable format; and

sorting the data items, wherein sorting the data items comprises providing the data items to a list sorter configured to sort data items from both the specific data retrieval method and the generic data retrieval method, the data from the specific data retrieval method being provided to the list sorter in the transformed, sortable format and the data from the generic data retrieval method being provided to the list sorter in the default format of the data items.

29. (Previously Presented) A computer-implemented method of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the method comprising:

receiving a request to sort data items of a list of a particular list type;

calling a generic data retrieval method because the data items are sortable in a default format;

calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the particular list type because the data items are not sortable in the default format; and

sorting the data items, wherein sorting the data items comprises providing the data items to a list sorter for which the generic data retrieval method is defined; wherein the list sorter and the generic data retrieval method are components of a class and the specific data retrieval method is a component of a subclass.

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30. (Currently Amended) A signal-bearing computer readable medium, comprising a sorting program, wherein the sorting program, when executed by a processor, performs an operation of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the operation comprising:

receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list of a first particular list type, the data items of the first list being in a default format, the default format being a sortable format capable of being sorted by a list sorter, wherein the list sorter is incapable of sorting data elements in a format other than the sortable format;

calling a generic data retrieval method because to provide the data items of the first list are sortable, to the list sorter in [[a]] their default format;

sorting, by the list sorter, the data elements of the first list in their default format;

receiving a second request to sort data items of a second list of a second particular list type, the data items of the second list being in a default format which is other than the sortable format and therefore not sortable, by the list sorter, in their default format;

calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the second particular list type because and configured to provide the data items of the second list are not sortable in the default to the list sorter in the sortable format after having been transformed from their default format; and

sorting, by the list sorter, the data items of the second list in the transformed sortable format.

Please add the following new claims:

31. (New) A computer readable medium, comprising a program, wherein the program, when executed by a processor, performs an operation of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the operation comprising:

receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list of a first particular list type;

calling a generic data retrieval method because the data items of the first list are sortable in their default format;

sorting the data elements of the first list in their default format;

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receiving a second request to sort data items of a second list of a second particular list type;

calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the second particular list type because the data items of the second list are not sortable in their default format;

when the specific data retrieval method is called, transforming the data items of the second list from their default format to a sortable format, wherein transforming the data items of the second list from their default format to the sortable format comprises padding the data items with values so that each data item is of a same length; and

sorting the data items of the second list in the sortable format.

32. (New) A computer readable medium, comprising a program, wherein the program, when executed by a processor, performs an operation of sorting lists in a software environment comprising at least two list types, the operation comprising:

receiving a first request to sort data items of a first list of a first particular list type;

calling a generic data retrieval method because the data items of the first list are sortable in their default format;

sorting the data elements of the first list in their default format;

receiving a second request to sort data items of a second list of a second particular list type;

calling a specific data retrieval method uniquely defined for the second particular list type because the data items of the second list are not sortable in their default format; and

sorting the data items of the second list in the sortable format;

wherein sorting the data items of the first and second lists comprises providing the data items to a list sorter for which the generic data retrieval method is defined; and wherein the list sorter and the generic data retrieval method are components of a class and the specific data retrieval method is a component of a subclass.